



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff **Scott Smith** Chief Deputy

Summer Safety Tips

It's that time of year. Warm weather has finally arrived and summer is almost here. As summer arrives, we will see more children as they get out of school, more bicycles on streets and sidewalks and more motorcycles on our highways. As a result, I thought I would address some simple safety tips that can make it safer for us all as we are out and about.

First and foremost, I would like to remind parents to educate your children and set guidelines for them for their safety. As a parent it is your responsibility to know where your children are, who they are with and what they are doing. By setting simple guidelines, you can help to minimize the risk of tragedy coming to your child. Never forget that every child needs their parents to set rules, even when it may not be the most popular decision. Rules very well may save their life.

Next let's take a look at some of the simple rules of being a pedestrian. Always remember to pay attention to what is going on around you. Just because you are on the sidewalk, doesn't mean a car can't jump the curb and hit you. When you are walking on a street without a sidewalk, always walk against traffic so that you can see the traffic as it approaches you and you can get out of the way if you need to. Do your best to cross the street at crosswalks. When in the crosswalk, you have the right of way and traffic is supposed to stop for you but don't take that for granted. Pay attention and make sure traffic is stopping before you cross the street and always wear clothing that makes you highly visible.

Those of you riding bicycles, there are a number of rules many don't know about. First, you are required to obey all traffic laws, including stopping at stop signs. Did you know that you can get a ticket if you blow a stop sign on a bicycle? Next, when riding your bicycle, you must drive on the right side of the street and never against traffic like pedestrians do. Motorists make sure you leave at least 3 feet between your vehicle and a bicycle when passing one. When riding your bicycle, you are required to use hand signals when turning. If you don't, you risk being struck by a vehicle and it is against the law not to use them. Make sure you ride your bicycle as far to the right side of the road as possible and never block traffic approaching from the rear as you are required to yield the right of way to them. Don't be afraid to wear a helmet. Head injuries are serious and a helmet can save you from severe injury or even death.

Finally, make sure you watch out for motorcycles. When at a stop sign, take that extra couple seconds and look both ways one extra time before pulling out. As a licensed motorcycle operator, I can tell you that is the one thing we fear most. Deputies respond to crashes every year involving a motorcycle that

was struck by someone pulling out from a stop sign when they didn't see the motorcycle coming. Finally, motorcycle operators, please wear your helmets. They really do save lives.

By following these simple tips and paying attention to what is going on around you, we can work together to keep everyone safe on our highways and maintain Dodge County's reputation as a safe place to live, work and visit.

Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt